



# PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

Date: May 12, 2010

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Subject: Common Standards—When to submit a response and when Common Standards are reviewed

## Summary

The Commission frequently receives questions from program sponsors and potential program sponsors about the Common Standards. This alert provides information on the Commission's Common Standards and answers the following questions:

- What exactly are the Common Standards?
- What version of the Common Standards should we be operating under at this time?
- When should an approved institution submit a response to the Common Standards?
- Does each program at the institution have its own response to the Common Standards?
- Are all credential programs supposed to be represented in the Common Standards? Even Designated Subjects and Guidelines Based Tier II Administrative Services programs?
- Are Common Standards reviewed during Program Assessment?
- When an institution is accredited by NCATE, does the institution still submit a response to the Commission's Common Standards?

## What exactly are the Common Standards?

The Commission's Common Standards are standards that apply to the institution at large, or the "unit" that sponsors anywhere from one to many credentialing programs. These standards are designed to ensure that the institution appropriately provides resources, leadership, support, and other critical services necessary so that the educator preparation programs can operate efficiently and effectively.

**What version of the Common Standards should we be operating under at this time?**

All educator preparation programs should currently be operating under and aligned with the 2008 Commission adopted version of the Common Standards. The Common Standards have undergone two revisions in recent years so it is understandable that there is confusion about this in the field. The first revision (the 2007 adopted version) was a major revision to the 1997 version, replaced the 8 Common Standards with 9 Common Standards, and was designed to reflect the new accreditation system. The most important differences are found in the last sentence of Common Standard 1, and all of Common Standards 2 and 9. Another revision was undertaken in 2008 at the direction of the Commission in order to ensure that the language of the Common Standards was applicable to all kinds of credential types and the variety of possible program sponsors.

Some institutions have written to and been reviewed against the new 2008 Common Standards. These included some of those institutions that completed a site visit in 2008-09 (use of the 2008 Common Standards was optional) and all of those institutions that completed a site visit in 2009-10. **While not all program sponsors have had to submit to the Commission a 2008 Common Standards document, all educator preparation programs must be operating in alignment with those standards at this time.**

**When should an approved institution submit a response to the Common Standards?**

Institutions are required to submit a Common Standards response to the Commission at two points in the accreditation system: 1) prior to an accreditation site visit (year 6 of the cycle); and 2) upon submitting a new program proposal.

1. Prior to an accreditation site visit – Approximately 3-6 months prior to a site visit, the institution submits an updated response to the 2008 Common Standards to the consultant assigned to your institution (*Not applicable to NCATE institutions – NCATE institutions should see question further below*). This document serves as a primary focus for all accreditation site visits. A cluster of reviewers will review the Common Standards document and will collect evidence, including interviews, to determine whether the institution is operating in alignment with the Common Standards. Findings on these 9 Common Standards largely determine the accreditation recommendation from the team, and ultimately, the COA decision on accreditation.
2. Upon Submitting a New Program Proposal - A full institutional response to the 2008 Common Standards is required with the new program proposal. This document should reflect all programs offered by an institution, including the new program being proposed.

If, however, an institution that is submitting a new program proposal has recently undergone an accreditation visit using either the 2007 or 2008 Common Standards, or has already submitted a full response to the 2007 or 2008 Common Standards with the submission of a previous new program proposal, a more streamlined approach is available. In these cases, the institution need only submit a ***Common Standards New Program Addendum*** providing information that is specific to the proposed educator preparation program relative to the institution's Common Standards response. This option would ONLY apply to those institutions that have had a site visit in 2008, 2009 or 2010 using the revised Common

Standards (2007 or 2008). The Common Standards addendum should address the following questions:

***Common Standards New Program Addendum***

- Standard 1: Who in the Unit will have *leadership* responsibilities for this program?
- Standard 2: How will evaluation of this program fit into the Unit *Assessment System*?
- Standard 3: How will this program be supported with *resources*?
- Standard 4: What will be the criteria for selection of *faculty and instructional personnel for this program*?
- Standard 5: Are there particular *admission criteria* for the proposed program?
- Standard 6: How will candidates be provided with timely and accurate information about the program? How will candidates requiring additional assistance be *guided and supported*?
- Standard 7: What will the *field experiences and clinical practice* include? How will sites be selected and evaluated?
- Standard 8: What will be the criteria for selection of *district-employed supervisors*?
- Standard 9: What will be the program *assessments used to determine candidate competence* as they move through the program?

Once the new educator preparation program has been approved, the institution is responsible for incorporating information from the ***Common Standards New Program Addendum*** into the institution's Common Standards Document and submitting an updated electronic copy to the CTC.

NOTE: If the institution has not submitted a response to the revised Common Standards (2007 or 2008), and if it is scheduled for an accreditation site visit within one year of the submission of the proposed educator preparation program, the submission and review of the institution's response to the 2008 Common Standards may be delayed until the site visit at the request of the institution. Requests must be submitted to the Administrator of Accreditation.

**Does each program at the institution develop its own response to the Common Standards?**

No. The Common Standards address issues at the institution level. Each institution should develop **one response** to the Common Standards that addresses all approved educator preparation programs offered by the institution. Individual approved programs may have specific information included in the responses for selected Common Standards (e.g., Admission and Field Experience Common Standards). However, only one Common Standards document will be maintained at the CTC for each approved institution regardless of how many approved programs are offered.

**Are all credential programs supposed to be represented in the Common Standards? Even Designated Subjects and Guidelines Based Tier II Administrative Services programs?**

Yes, with one exception. All programs leading to a CTC certificate or credential are now considered part of and subject to the accreditation system. Hence, all programs, including Designated Subjects program and Guidelines-Based Tier II Administrative Services programs must be incorporated into an institution's Common Standards document. The only exception to this is subject matter programs (which waive the requirement that a prospective teacher pass the subject matter examination) which have not yet been incorporated into the accreditation system.

**Are Common Standards reviewed during Program Assessment?**

No. Program Assessment is focused on the adopted program standards. The institution is reviewed at the Common Standards level during a site visit. The Common Standards are not reviewed during Biennial Reports or Program Assessment.

**When an institution is accredited by NCATE, does the institution still submit a response to the Commission's Common Standards?**

The NCATE Unit Standards have been reviewed by the Committee on Accreditation (COA) for comparability to the Commission's Common Standards. An alignment matrix was developed and adopted by the COA that identifies four sentences of the Common Standards that are not adequately addressed by the NCATE Unit Standards.

Responding to the NCATE Unit standards and the four sentences from the Common Standards has been deemed to be equivalent to responding to California's Common Standards. Therefore, for an accreditation site visit, NCATE accredited institutions must only submit the NCATE Institutional Report and an NCATE addendum that addresses the four additional CTC sentences with their site visit documentation as the response to the Commission's Common Standards. When proposing a new credential program, the NCATE institution must submit the ***Common Standards Addendum*** and integrate the information for the new program into the NCATE Institutional Response and the four sentences from the Commission's Common Standards.

**References**

Common Standards web page: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/STDS-common.html>

Common Standards and Glossary: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/standards/CommonStandardsTeacherPrep.pdf>

NCATE Standards Alignment Matrix: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/accred-alignment.html>

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